

'No simple task' — Jaworski

WASHINGTON (AP) — Leon Jaworski, warning against jumping to conclusions, took charge Monday of the House investigation into alleged South Korean influence-buying in Congress.

"I have the feeling it's not going to be a simple task," he said. "It's one of ferreting out the facts and searching for the truth and you never know what you're going to run into, what roadblocks there may be."

The former special Watergate prosecutor told reporters that indulging in speculation creates an impression "that this is a holocaust of some kind," when the probe may show that "there has been wrongdoing perchance but that it's not as widespread as had been originally thought."

Jaworski talked to reporters briefly when he arrived at the Capitol to take over as chief investigator of the House ethics committee's probe of motives behind gifts, favors and cash contributions South Koreans allegedly have given congressmen.

He said he did not want Congress, congressmen or other government institutions labeled "untrustworthy until we know what the facts are."

"And this jumping to conclusions really bothers me," he added.

Jaworski said he hopes to "bring it (the investigation) to a close within the near future," but said it was impossible to predict how long it will take.

"Haste will come second," he said. "Thoroughness will come first."

Jaworski said he expects some hearings to be public, but said others may be secret to prevent unfounded accusations from harming "anyone who may be innocent."

Jaworski sidestepped a question about reports last week that Rep. John J. Flynt, D-Ga., chairman of the ethics committee, attempted on his own to get Korean rice dealer Tongsun Park's testimony. Jaworski said he didn't know the facts. Flynt has denied knowing of any attempts by staff members to contact Park.

Asked if he thought Flynt might try to arrange future interviews on his own, Jaworski said, "I really don't. I don't think we're going to have any problems about that."

Tongsun Park, a key figure in the investigation, fled to London shortly after the scandal broke last year.

He distributed at least \$12,000 in cash campaign and office fund contributions to seven congressmen, gave a \$10,000 cash gift to a former congressman's wife and hosted parties and dinners at his fashionable George Town Club for dozens of congressmen.

The House committee and the Justice Department are investigating whether those and other gifts and favors from South Koreans to congressmen were made by individuals acting alone or were part of an attempt by the South Korean government to buy influence in Congress.

Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell said in July that he expected some persons to be prosecuted in connection with the Justice Department's investigation.